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ABSTRACT

This study was undertaken to investigate the personal reading habits of scholars/activists in the field of Women's Studies (WS), determine the use pattern of documentary sources of information in WS, and identify various sources of information used by those engaged in research work, teaching or social action work in the field of WS in India. The questionnaire method was used. Respondents selected for this study were post-graduate students of WS and teachers, as well as others working in various non-government organizations in India. Out of the total respondents (280), Social Action Group (SAG) constituted the majority (42.86%), followed by Faculty Members (FM) (31.43%) and post-graduate students of WS (25.71%). The following data tables are provided: Institution and Category-Wise Break-up of Respondents; Membership of Professional Bodies/Societies; Conference/Seminars Attended; Type of Publications; Personal Subscription of Periodicals; Ways for Keeping Abreast of Latest Developments; Preferred Channels of Information; Frequency of Visits to Institution's Library; Average Time Spent on Each Library Visit; Purpose of Visiting the Library; Relevance of Information Obtained from Own Library; Relevance of Information Obtained from Other Libraries; Sources of Information Used; Use of Government Publications; Sources for Getting Information about Government Publications; Notification of Forthcoming Conferences/Seminars; Use of Legal Sources of Information; Types of Legal Sources Used; Sources of Locating a Particular Legal Provision or Case Law; Sources of Obtaining Information about New Legislation/Amendments; and Theses and Dissertation. Appendixes include a list of "Responded NGOs" and libraries useful in the field of WS, as well as lists of frequently used: government publications; periodicals; indexing/abstracting sources and services; dictionaries/thesauri; directories; handbooks and resource guides; biographical sources; statistical resources; and dissertation sources. (AEF)

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Information use in gender and development: a study of behavioral pattern

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The progress of any subject is impeded unless new knowledge generated by research flows freely, quickly and timely among the user community. An information system, therefore, must bring into attention the newly generated information to the users as soon as it is generated because nascent information by its very nature is perishable. Assessment of reading habits of its users is an important task of any efficient information retrieval system so that information needs of its users may be identified and the information available in different types of formats and through a variety of channels may be provided to the users.

Reading habits of scholars in any field depend both on their personal characteristics as well as characteristics of specialty in which they work. Though personal characteristics of scholars is one of the important factors which contributes towards reading habits, but subject characteristics also have definite impact on reading habits of scholars in any field. It has been noticed that the more interdisciplinary the subject studied, the more scattered is its literature and therefore, the larger is the amount of material to be examined in order to keep abreast of recent developments. It is because of this reason, any person working in any interdisciplinary field has to read more.

The amount of reading done by scholars have wide variations. While some of them may be highly literature oriented others may not. The amount of reading varies substantially not only among the persons working in different disciplines but also among those working in the same

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discipline. The factors responsible for such variations have been identified as education, research experience, age, motivation, intelligence and persistence. But age and seniority have more influence on the reading habits than other characteristics. Many surveys have revealed the fact that the older scientists make less use of literature than the younger ones.

NEED OF ASSESSING READING HABITS AND INFORMATION USE IN THE FIELD OF WOMEN'S STUDIES (WS)

In a field like Women's Studies (WS), where tremendous expansion in research and action is taking place for women's development resulting into information explosion, it becomes more important to improve dissemination of information and to design an effective system to control and organize the information. A substantial quality of information, generated in this field as the subject, has very wide scope because of its multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, cross-cultural and inter-regional nature. Moreover, information requirements are voluminous and of a very diverse nature. Users, their categories and information needs are different at different levels. Information needs of researchers on women's issues are different from that of women workers working at the grass root level in remote areas. Not only this but information comes in a wide range of physical forms. A majority of information in this field is available in the form of "grey literature" or "fugitive literature" which are not available through the traditional book trade channels. One important difference, between resources used in WS and many other subjects, is that WS has its roots both in scholarship and activism or the efforts of individuals and organizations to expand opportunities to women and bring about equity between genders. We, therefore, need to have a more complete understanding of the weaknesses and the strengths of the information channels used by scholars / activists in the field of WS so that unfulfilled or inadequate needs of users of information may be identified and most preferred channels of information in the field of WS may be noticed.

OBJECTIVES

The present study was undertaken to fulfill the following objectives: -

- To investigate the personal reading habits of scholars / activists in the field of WS.
- To determine the use pattern of documentary sources of information in WS.
- To identify various sources of information used by those engaged in research work, teaching or social action work in the field of WS in India.

SCOPE

1. This study will help NGOs / Institutions in the field of WS in better "COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT' of their libraries on the basis of information use pattern.
2. The present study will make librarians / information scientists aware of the reading habits of those working in the field of WS. This will help them in catering to their information needs in a better way.
3. This study may also help in proportional allocation of funds in the libraries on the basis of use pattern of documentary sources.

4. With the help of this study:
   a) Journals may be subscribed in terms of their relative use.
   b) Acquisition policy of the centre may be formulated on the basis of their preferences of documentary sources of information.
   c) Services of the libraries / information centre may be improved and can be managed in a better way.
   d) A large-scale national study in India can be suggested on the basis of the findings of this study.
   e) Local networks on the focused subject may be established for the proper dissemination of information.

METHODOLOGY

For conducting survey the investigator used "Questionnaire Method". It was also thought proper to interview a few respondents so as to cross check the responses received through questionnaire. In order to ensure consistency in the organization of data and comparability in the findings, structured interview was preferred. The respondents selected for this study were Post Graduate students of WS/ Teachers as well as those working in various Non Government Organizations of the country. Thus, information use pattern of both scholars and of field workers has been taken care of in the present study.

BREAK-UP OF RESPONDENTS

Out of total respondents (280), Social Action Group (SAG) constituted the majority (42.86%), followed by Faculty Members (FM) (31.43%) and post-graduate students of WS (25.71%). As is evident from Table 1 all FM and students belonged to five prestigious institutions of India in the field of WS, whereas, respondents of SAG group were taken from 24 NGOs of the country. (Appendix 1)

Table – 1

Institution and Category-wise break-up of respondents

CATEGORIES FUSERS INSTITUTIONS	FM (88)		STUDENTS (72)		SAG (120)		TOTAL (280)	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
ITC, Lucknow	44	50	27	37.5	-	-	71	25.36
Depts. Of WS, Lucknow University	26	29.55	26	36.11	-	-	52	18.57
SNDT Univ., Mumbai	5	5.68	12	16.67	-	-	17	6.07
Jadavpur Univ., Kolkata	5	5.68	7	9.72	-	-	12	4.29
CWDS, New Delhi	8	9.09	-	-	4	3.33	12	4.29
NGOs (List of 24 NGOs attached)	-	-	-	-	166	96.67	116	41.42
TOTAL	88	100	72	100	120	100	280	100
	88	31.43	72	25.71	120	42.86	280	100

AGE OF RESPONDENTS

Age-wise breakup of respondents shows that FM were older than students and SAG.

SEX OF RESPONDENTS

Appreciable number of males was found to be present when they were analyzed according to their sex. This shows that not only females but also males are becoming sensitive towards women related issues.

MEMBERSHIPS OF PROFESSIONAL BODIES / SOCIETIES

Table – 2

Membership of Professional bodies/societies

CATEGORIES TYPES	YES		NO		TOTAL	
	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%
FM	**72**	**81.82**	16	18.18	88	31.43
Students	16	22.22	56	77.78	72	25.71
SAG	72	60.00	48	40	120	42.86
TOTAL	**160**	**57.14**	**120**	**42.86**	**280**	**100**

Table 2 shows that more seniors were members of professional bodies than the junior ones. This indicates that professionalism increases with age and experience. A healthy trend was noticed in this study that appreciably higher numbers of FM were found to be the members of international professional bodies.

CONFERENCE / SEMINARS ATTENDED

Table – 3

Conference / Seminars attended CATEGORIES OF RESPONDENTS	YES		NO		TOTAL	
	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%
FM (88)	88	100	-	-	88	100
Students (72)	72	100	-	-	72	100
SAG (120)	104	66.67	8	13.33	120	100
Total (280)	264	94.29	8	5.71	280	100

It is clear from Table 3 that appreciably higher number of respondents (94.29%) attended conferences or workshops. Further, more number of FM attended international and national conferences than students and SAG, attending more regional or local conferences.

TYPE OF PUBLICATIONS

Table – 4

Types of Publication

CATEGORIES TYPES	FM (22)		STUDENTS (18)		SAG (30)		TOTAL (70)	
	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%
Journal articles	**14**	**63.63**	6	33.33	**16**	**53.33**	36	51.43
Reviews	2	9.09	-	-	8	26.66	10	14.29
Books	2	9.09	2	11.11	8	26.66	12	17.14
Reports	6	27.27	-	-	**12**	**40**	18	25.71
Research work	8	36.36	8	**44.44**	**14**	**46.66**	30	42.86
Stories on women TV/Radio	-	-	2	11.11	-	-	2	2.86

Table 4 shows that majority of respondents (51.43%) published articles in the journals as compared to research works published by 42.86% respondents. As was expected, more SAG published reports because the kind of work they do was project oriented for which they were required to submit a report.

PERSONAL SUBSCRIPTION OF PERIODICALS

Table – 5

Personal Subscription of Periodicals

CATEGORIES OF RESPONDENTS	YES		NO		TOTAL	
	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%
FM (88)	64	72.72	24	27.27	88	31.43
Students (72)	32	44.44	40	55.55	72	25.71
SAG (120)	56	46.66	64	53.33	120	42.86
TOTAL (280)	**152**	**54.29**	**128**	**53.33**	**280**	**42.86**

It was pleasing to note that a good number of respondents 54.29% were found to be subscribing to periodicals on WS. As is evident from Table 5, more number of FM subscribed periodicals than other categories of respondents. This again confirms the findings of other surveys that type of work and seniority has impact on personal subscription habits of scientists. Out of 54.29% respondents subscribing to periodicals, all of them were found to be subscribing to Indian journals.

WAYS FOR KEEPING ABREAST OF LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

Table – 6

Ways for Keeping Abreast of Latest Developments

CATEGORIES / WAYS	FM (88)		STUDENTS (72)		SAG (120)		TOTAL (280)	
	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%
By scanning current issues of periodicals	64	72.72	72	100	88	73.33	**224**	**80**
By scanning indexing / abstracting periodicals	24	27.27	32	44.44	24	6.66	80	22.86
By attending seminars / workshops etc.	72	81.81	72	100	104	86.66	**248**	**88.57**
Through information services provided by documentation / information centre	16	18.18	16	22.22	24	20	56	20

The present study reflects that scanning of current issues of periodicals and participation in seminars / workshops are the most dominating ways for keeping abreast of latest developments in the field of WS (Table 6).

PREFERRED CHANNELS OF INFORMATION

Table – 7

Preferred Channels of Information

CATEGORIES PREFERRED CHANNELS	FM (88)		STUDENTS (72)		SAG (120)		TOTAL (280)	
	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%
By visiting your institution's library	**88**	**100**	**56**	77.77	44	36.66	188	67.14
By visiting any other library	**80**	**90.9**	**56**	77.77	**72**	**60**	208	74.29
By taking help of your teacher/friend / colleague	40	45.45	56	77.77	40	33.33	136	48.57
Internet	32	36.36	40	55.56	64	53.33	136	48.57
Conferences/seminars	35	39.77	61	84.72	38	31.67	134	47.86

The present study reveals that libraries are the most preferred channel of information amongst scholars in WS as they are mostly dependent on libraries of either their institution or any other library for getting desired information (Table 7). It is also interesting to note that use of informal channel of information such as taking help of teacher/friend/colleague is also one of the frequently used and popular methods for getting desired information in the field of WS.

FREQUENCY OF VISITS TO INSTITUTION'S LIBRARY

Table –8

Frequency of Visits to Institution's Library

CATEGORIES / WAYS	FM (88)		STUDENTS (72)		SAG (120)		TOTAL (280)	
	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%
Daily	16	18.18	**48**	**66.67**	**48**	**40**	112	28.4
Once a week	-	-	-	-	24	20	24	8.57
Twice a week	**48**	**54.54**	16	22.22	32	26.66	96	34.29
Monthly	16	18.18	8	11.11	8	6.66	32	11.43
Thrice a month	4	4.55	-	-	-	-	4	1.43
As and when required	4	4.55	-	-	8	6.66	12	4.29
TOTAL	**88**	**100**	**72**	**100**	**120**	**100**	**280**	**100**

This study confirms the findings of many reading habits' surveys that older scientists make less use of literature and are less frequent visitor of the library than the younger ones. While majority of students and SAG visit their institution's library daily, most of the FM use library only twice a week. (Table 8)

AVERAGE TIME SPENT ON EACH LIBRARY VISIT

Table – 9

Average Time Spent on Each Library Visit

CATEGORIES / AVERAGE TIME SPENT	FM (88)		STUDENTS (72)		SAG (120)		TOTAL (280)	
	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%
Less than one hour	24	27.27	16	22.22	40	33.33	80	28.57
1 – 5 hours	**48**	**54.55**	40	55.55	**48**	**40**	136	48.57
6 – 7 hours	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Not certain	16	18.18	16	22.23	32	26.67	64	22.86
TOTAL	**88**	**100**	**72**	**100**	**120**	**100**	**280**	**100**

It is also found in this study that approximately 50% scholars in the field of WS spent between 1 to 5 hours in the library during each visit (Table 9). It is interesting to note that though

the FM were less frequent visitors of the library but, they were found to be spending more time during each visit.

PURPOSE OF VISITING THE LIBRARY

Table – 10

Purpose of Visiting the Library

CATEGORIES / PURPOSE	FM (88)		STUDENTS (72)		SAG (120)		TOTAL (280)	
	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%
For obtaining information for writing a paper	**56**	**63.63**	**64**	**88.88**	64	53.34	184	65.71
For obtaining general information from news-papers, magazines, etc.	**64**	**72.72**	40	55.55	40	33.33	144	51.43
For obtaining information for preparing a proposal for a new project	**64**	**72.72**	32	44.44	**80**	**66.66**	176	62.86
For procedural information	32	36.36	24	33.33	32	26.66	88	31.43

While inquiring about the purpose of visiting the library, it was found that most of the students visit the library for obtaining information for writing a paper, whereas, maximum number of SAG visit library for background material needed for preparing a proposal for a new project (Table 10). FM visit the library for varying purposes.

RELEVANCE OF INFORMATION OBTAINED FROM LIBRARIES

Table – 11

Relevance of Information Obtained from Own Library

CATEGORIES / EXTENT OF SUCCESS	FM (88)		STUDENTS (72)		SAG (120)		TOTAL (280)	
	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%
Mostly	48	**54.54**	24	33.33	96	**80**	168	**60**
Seldom	32	36.37	48	**66.67**	16	13.34	96	34.29
Never	8	9.09	-	-	8	6.66	16	5.71

Table – 12

Relevance of Information Obtained from Other Libraries

CATEGORIES / EXTENT OF SUCCESS	FM (88)		STUDENTS (72)		SAG (120)		TOTAL (280)	
	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%
Mostly	48	**54.54**	40	**55.55**	32	26.66	120	42.86
Seldom	32	36.36	24	33.33	64	**53.33**	120	42.86
Never	8	9.09	8	22.22	24	13.33	40	14.28
TOTAL	**88**	**100**	**72**	**100**	**120**	**100**	**280**	**100**

It was also noticed in this study that substantially higher number of scholars in WS get desired information from their own library (Table 11). While most of the FM and SAG are capable of locating desired information from their respective libraries, maximum number of students is seldom successful and hence they take the help of other libraries also. FM and SAG also used libraries of other than their own institute at the time of need. (Table 12) The reason for the students not getting the desired information from only one library may be the lack of syllabus oriented reading material in this newly emerged field.

LIBRARIES USEFUL IN THE FIELD OF WOMEN'S STUDIES (WS)

One of the most important findings of this study is that it identifies most preferred libraries being frequently used by the scholars of WS in the country. Appendix 2 shows list of such libraries in India in order of preference.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION USED

Usefulness of Sources of Information

Table – 13

Sources of Information Used

CATEGORIES / SOURCES OF INFORMATION	FM (88)		STUDENTS (72)		SAG (120)		TOTAL (280)	
	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%
Periodicals / Journals / Newsletters / Bulletins	88	**100**	72	**100**	120	**100**	280	100
Dictionaries and Thesaurus	88	**100**	72	**100**	120	**100**	280	100
Directories	88	**100**	72	**100**	120	**100**	280	100
Statistical Sources	88	**100**	68	94.44	120	**100**	276	98.57

Hand books and Resource guides	80	90.91	66	91.67	112	93.33	258	92.14
Theses/dissertations	88	**100**	70	97.22	93	77.5	251	89.64
Biographical Sources	72	81.82	54	75	108	90	234	83.57
Government Publications	88	**100**	40	55.56	104	86.67	232	82.86
Books/Monographs	88	**100**	64	88.89	72	60	224	80
Legal Sources	64	72.73	32	44.44	112	93.33	208	74.29
Conferences/Seminar Proceedings	64	72.73	48	66.67	64	53.33	176	62.86
Audio - Visual sources	32	36.36	40	55.56	80	66.67	152	54.29
Bibliographical Sources	52	59.09	34	47.22	58	48.33	144	51.43
Resources on the Net	32	36.36	40	44.44	64	46.67	136	48.57

This study reflects that journals/newsletter/bulletins, dictionaries/thesaurus, directories, handbooks, statistical sources, theses/dissertations, books/monographs and government publications are the most preferred sources of information in WS. (Table 13) While all the FM make use of all these sources of information, students and SAG prefer journals/newsletter/bulletins, dictionaries/thesaurus, directories and statistical sources only. This may reflect that seniors and more experienced persons in the field of WS make use of variety of sources than the younger ones.

USE OF GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS

Table – 14

Types of Government Publications Used

CATEGORIES	FM (88)		STUDENTS (72)		SAG (120)		TOTAL (280)	
TYPES	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%
Policy documents	56	63.64	24	**33.33**	80	**66.67**	160	**57.14**
Committees/ Commissions reports	88	**100**	16	22.22	80	**66.67**	184	**65.71**
Working group reports	40	45.46	8	11.11	64	53.33	112	40
Reports of State Authorities	8	9.09	-	-	-	-	8	2.86

Table – 15

Sources for Getting Information About Government Publications

CATEGORIES	FM (88)		STUDENTS (72)		SAG (120)		TOTAL (280)	
SOURCES	NO.		NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%
Through teacher / friend / colleague	40	45.46	32	44.44	56	46.67	128	45.71
Through citation / bibliographies	48	54.55	16	61.11	32	26.67	96	34.29
Through services given in journals / newspapers, etc.	72	81.82	32	44.44	96	80	200	71.43
By contacting Government departments	-	-	8	11.11	16	13.33	24	8.57
By media persons	-	-	-	-	8	6.67	8	2.86

Government publications are substantially used documents in the field of WS. More number of FM use these publication than other categories of respondents. It is also noticed that committees and commissions reports and policy documents are the most preferred type of Government publications in WS (table 14). It may be because of the fact that committees/commission reports and policy documents on women issues contain firsthand information on that particular issue for which they are constituted and hence are most sought. Majority of the respondents (71.43%) indicated that they come to know about the existence of Government Publications through Reviews given in journals/ newspapers (Table 15). It is happy to note that the scholars of WS also use personal contacts for getting information about the existence of government publications, which is a very healthy pattern. A list of most used government publications in the field of WS in the country was also prepared on the basis of respondents' preferences for the same. (Appendix 3)

NOTIFICATION OF FORTHCOMING CONFERENCES/ SEMINARS

Table 16

Ways of Notifying forthcoming Conferences/Seminars

Categories	FM (88)		STUDENTS (72)		SAG (120)		Total (280)	
Ways	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Through personal correspondence	32	36.36	48	66.67	64	53.33	144	51.43
Through notification in newsletters	56	63.64	24	33.33	64	53.33	144	51.43
Through friends/ teachers/ colleagues	80	90.91	40	55.56	56	46.67	176	62.84

Table 16 indicates that all categories of respondents come to know about the forthcoming conferences through personal means, bulletin / newsletters etc. FM and SAG were found to be more professional as they make more use of newsletters.

USE OF LEGAL SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Table – 17

Use of Legal Sources of Information

CATEGORIES	YES		NO		TOTAL	
OF RESPONDENTS	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
FM (88)	64	72.73	24	27.27	88	31.43
Students (72)	32	44.44	40	55.56	72	25.71
SAG (120)	112	93.33	8	6.67	120	42.86
Total (280)	**208**	**74.29**	**72**	**25.71**	**280**	**100**

Table –18

Types of Legal Sources Used

CATEGORIES	FM (64)		STUDENTS (32)		SAG (112)		TOTAL (208)	
TYPES	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%
Acts and Statutes	32	50	16	50	64	57.14	112	53.85
	32	50	-	-	64	57.14	96	46.15

Commentaries on Acts and Statutes								
Law reports containing case laws	32	50	32	100	80	71.43	144	69.23

Table –19

SOURCES OF LOCATING A

PARTICULAR LEGAL PROVISION OR CASE LAW

CATEGORIES OF RESPONDENTS	FM (64)		STUDENTS (32)		SAG (112)		TOTAL (208)	
SOURCES	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%
Through commentaries on specific laws	24	37.5	8	25	80	71.43	112	53.85
Through digests	16	25	8	25	38	28.57	148	71.15
With the help of any lawyers / library staff	24	37.5	32	100	72	64.29	128	61.54
Through resource person during workshop	-	-	-	-	8	7.14	8	3.85

Table 20
SOURCES OF OBTAINING INFORMATION ABOUT NEW LEGISLATION/AMENDMENTS

CATEGORIES	FM (64)		STUDENTS (32)		SAG (112)		TOTAL (208)	
SOURCES	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%
Through newspapers	56	87.5	32	100	112	100	200	96.15
Through colleagues	16	25	24	75	16	14.29	56	26.92
Through legal sources	24	37.5	24	75	56	50	104	50
Through electronic sources	-	-	-	-	8	7.14	8	3.85

Through media	-	-	-	-	8	7.14	8	3.85
Through NGOs newsletters	8	12.5	-	-	-	-	8	3.85

Legal rights of and the offences relating to women and their legal remedies is one of the thrust areas in the filed of WS. It was therefore, necessary to determine the pattern and use of legal sources by the scholars/activists in the field of WS. It was noticed that FM and SAG make use of legal sources of information substantially (Table 17). While FM and SAG use all type of legal sources – bare acts and statutes, commentaries an acts and statutes and law reports containing case laws equally, students use only bare acts and law reports (Table 18) for locating a particular legal provision or case law on any point. Secondary publications such as digests of case laws were found to be popular among most of the respondents. Besides, commentaries on specific laws or help of lawyers were also found to be the main sources of locating a particular legal provision or case law (Table 19). Newspapers were found to be the chief source of information regarding new legislation/amendments (Table 20).

MOST PREFERRED PERIODICALS IN THE FIELD OF WS

A list of frequently used periodicals in order of preference has also been derived (Appendix 4) in this study on the basis of preferences of periodical given by the respondents.

It was happy to note that periodicals published by NGOs occupied very high ranks in this list. **"Manushi", "Chetna News", "Mahila Samakhya Newsletter", "Sahbhagi Ki Chitthi", "Roshni", "Nari Samvad", "Kurushetra"** and **"Saheli"** published by NGOs find place in the list of frequently used periodicals derived in this study.

All this reflects that NGOs are doing very good work in the field of WS and are brining out useful publications in the form of periodicals or otherwise. A glance through Appendix 4 also reflects the multidisciplinary nature of WS as the periodicals pertaining to the field of sociology, law, health, economics, social sciences, political science etc. do appear in this list.

INDEXING / ABSTRACTING SOURCES AND SERVICES

In WS, with a few exceptions, comprehensive secondary services are almost non-existent. Two indexing sources, namely, **'Guide to Women's Studies'** and **'Women Studies Index'** brought out by SNDT Women's University, Mumbai were found to be heavily used by the users. Besides, two in-house current awareness bulletins of Jadavpur University, Kolkata and Center for Women's Development Studies, New Delhi, were also found to be used on topics such as rape, dowry, violence against women etc. Appendix 5 reflects some indexing and abstracting sources and services used in WS.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL SOURCES AND SERVICES

The present study indicates a shift from general to thematic and subject bibliographies. It was found that with the development and expansion of WS, the need for focused and thematic bibliographies increased. Most of the bibliographies found to be used were in English language. However, few bibliographies in other regional languages were also found to be used.

Bibliographic services as mentioned by the respondents were those brought out by documentation centers/libraries. Some of them are of: SNDT Women's University Library, Mumbai, National Social Science Documentation Center (NASSDOC), New Delhi, and National Library, Kolkata. "**Bibliographic Reprints: Women**" in two parts brought out by NASSDOC was also found useful as was indicated by few respondents.

DICTIONARIES / THESAURI

The present study establishes dictionaries/thesauri as an important source of information in the field of WS as all the respondents use them. Unfortunately, none of the dictionaries/thesauri used was of Indian origin. This is due to the fact that no comprehensive dictionary / thesauri on WS is published from India. (Appendix 6)

DIRECTORIES

It is noticed that all the respondents use directories in order to know who is doing what and where in the field of WS. Most of the directories used by them were found to be of Indian origin. The reason being that quite a few directories indicating training institutes in WS, Women's originations and institutions for women in India have been brought out in recent years. Moreover, scholars/activists working in this field find Indian information more relevant than global information. A list of frequently used directories in order of preference is given in Appendix 7.

HAND BOOKS AND RESOURCE GUIDES

Handbooks and resource guides were used only by 92.14% of respondents. It is interesting to note that not only Indian but International handbook and resource guides published from other countries were also found to be used. Appendix 8 reveals the most used handbook/resource guides in the field of WS.

BIOGRAPHICAL SOURCES

Most of the respondents indicated that they use biographical sources to find out the contributions made and positions held of the biographee It was also revealed that international sources were found inadequate for not covering the biographies of Indians adequately, whereas, Indian sources were found to be inadequate for less prominent Indian personalities. A list of frequently used biographical sources in the field of WS is given in order of preference. (Appendix 9)

STATISTICAL RESOURCES

The present study reveals that statistical resources are frequently used sources in the field of WS. Nature of job is seen to be influencing the use of these sources. While FM use these resources to support their teaching and learning, activist group use them for their research activities and to expand opportunities to women and to bring about equity between genders. It was happy to note that the respondents use both national as well as international statistical resources as is evident from Appendix 10.

THESES AND DISSERTATION

Table – 21

Use of Theses / Dissertations

Categories	Yes		No		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
FM (88)	88	**100**	-	-	88	100
Students (72)	70	**97.22**	2	2.78	72	100
SAG (120)	93	77.5	27	22.5	120	100
Total (280)	**251**	**89.64**	**29**	**10.36**	**280**	**100**

Table 21 shows that appreciably higher number of respondents in the field of WS make use of theses/dissertations as sources of information. More use of these sources by FM and students may be because of the reason that their work is more academic and theses/dissertations are more suitable for their information needs. When asked about sources of getting information about theses and dissertations, majority of respondents quoted two important publications brought out by the Association of Indian Universities, whereas, quite a few responded that they get information about theses/ dissertations from teachers/friends/colleagues. (Appendix 11)

RESOURCES ON THE NET

The present study also indicates the substantial use of Internet resources in the field of WS. These women's studies resources included databases, e-journals, reports, discussions, curricula, reading lists, information "brochures" etc. available on the Net. Information centers, bookshops, publishers, universities, directories were also found to be used by the respondents.

Most of the e-journals used by the respondents were free or partially free journals. While "Aviva" (**http://www.aviva.org/**); "Advancing women in Leadership" (**http://www.advancingwomen.com/awl.html**) were the journals freely available, "Feminist Studies" etc. are partially free journals used by the respondents. Another important site, which was mentioned, by most of the respondents was (**http://www.sosig.ac.uk/subjects/feminism.html**). This freely available Internet service aiming at selecting high quality Internet information for students, academics, researchers and

practitioners in the social sciences, business and law is a part of the UK Resource Discovery Network

SAWNET (South Asian Women's Network) (**http://www.umiacs.umd.edu/users/sawweb/sawnet/**) was found to be used by majority of the respondents as it covers India also. This site was useful for reviews, news about south Asian women, legal issues, bookshelf, domestic violence, south Asian women's organization, home page of SAWNET members, divorce, health, career, grants and funding.

FeMiNa (**http://www.femina.com**) providing respondents with a comprehensive searchable directory of links to female friendly sites and information on the web is also worth mentioning.

National Organization for Women (NOW) (**http://now.org/now/home.html**) the largest organization of feminist activities in the U. S. having 500,000 contributing members and 550 chapters in all 50 states was found useful for new releases, legislative updates and NOW Times action alerts. Another site mentioned was The UN Internet Gateway on the Advancement and Empowerment of women (**http://www.un.org/womenwatch**).

Few sites of international organizations, national bodies and of women's organizations proved to be rich sources for the users working on women related issues. For example reports of International Labor Organization, UNICEF, Govt. of India's ninth plan, University Grants Commission, India etc. On line databases like Gender (**http://www.uni-koeln.de**) and library data bases of women's studies' centers providing information about their catalogues, conferences, courses, topical bibliographies were also mentioned by the users. For example SNDT Women's University Library, Mumbai, Center for Women's Development Studies, New Delhi, Madras Institute of Development Studies, Chennai, International Center for Research on Women, New Delhi etc.

Besides these, some sites of Indian NGOs were also used by majority of respondents. They are: Single Women's Organization, Ahmedabad; Joint Women's Programme, Bangalore; Streelekha, Mumbai; Maitree, Kolkata; The Center for Feminist Legal Research, New Delhi; IFSHA, Kali and WISCOMP (Women in Security Conflict Management and Peace), New Delhi; Research Institute for Women, Goa.

FINDINGS

1. The present study reveals that factors like age, seniority and nature of job influence the reading habits of those working in the field of WS. Further, not only females but also males are becoming sensitive towards women related issues.
2. It is noticed that more seniors are members of professional bodies than the junior ones indicating that professionalism increases with age and experience. Appreciably higher number of FM is found to be the members of international professional bodies.
3. Majority of respondents attended conferences / workshops but it is interesting to note that seniority and designation have impact on the type of conferences attended.

4. Another important finding is that Activist group publish more reports than students and FM because of their project oriented work where they are required to submit a report at the end of the project, whereas, FM publish more number of articles in the journals of WS.
5. More than half of the respondents are found to be subscribing to only Indian journals. Factors like seniority and age influence their journal subscription habits also.
6. The present study reveals that scholars in the field of WS are mostly dependent on libraries of either their institution or any other library for getting desired information.
7. This study confirms the findings of many reading habits' surveys that older scientist make less use of literature and are less frequent visitors of their libraries. It is interesting to note that though the FM were less visitors of the library, they are found to be spending more time during each visit than others. Purpose of visiting the library differs according to categories of respondents.
8. One of the most important findings of this study is that it identifies a number of libraries, which are being frequently used by the scholars of WS in the country and hence it may be presumed that these libraries contain useful collection on women related issues.. The 5 important libraries identified by respondents are:
   National Library, Kolkata
   Asiatic Library, Mumbai
   SNDT Women's University Library, Mumbai
   Center for Women's Development Studies, New Delhi (CWDS)
   National Social Science Documentation Center, New Delhi (NASSDOC)
9. This study reflects that periodicals/newsletters/bulletins; directories; dictionaries/thesaurus; statistical resources; handbooks/resource guides and books/monographs are most preferred sources of information in WS.
10. Though Internet resources are used by only 48.57% of respondents, they are found to be very useful for getting latest information on women related issues. Comparatively lesser use of Internet resources shows that the intrinsic value of information channels depends mainly on its accessibility.
11. Nature of job is seen to be influencing the usage of documentary sources of information.
12. Use of indexing/abstracting services in the field of WS is found to be very low (40%). This is due to non-availability of any comprehensive abstracting service on WS published from India. Various multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary indexing services available in the country were also used for the topics like rape, dowry, violence against women etc.
13. Journals published from NGOs occupied higher ranks in the list of most preferred journals of WS. Not only this but periodicals pertaining to the fields of sociology, law, health, economics, political science etc. did appear in the list of frequently used periodicals reflecting multidisciplinary nature of WS.
14. Another important finding of the present study is that primary periodicals published from India are more preferred by the scholars as compared to other international journals. Heavy reliance on Indian journals shows that scholars of WS find Indian information and coverage more relevant for their work rather than global information.
15. Appreciably higher percentage of users (98.57%) use statistical sources, which shows that statistical data plays a very important role in effective measurement and monitoring of the status of women but at the same time majority of respondents complained of non-availability of up-to-date and meaningful Indian data due to various limitations of data-collecting agencies. It is happy to note that those working in the field of WS in India are using both national and international statistical resources. FM where use these resources

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to support their teaching and learning, activist group use them for their research activities and to expand opportunities to women and to bring about equity between genders.

16. This study also indicates a shift from general to thematic and subject bibliographies. It is found that with the development and expansion of WS, the need for focused and thematic bibliographies increased. Most of the bibliographies found to be used are in English language, however, few bibliographies in other regional languages are also found to be used.
17. It is surprising to note that though all the respondents use dictionaries/thesauri, none of them is of Indian origin. It is due to the fact that no comprehensive dictionary/thesauri in WS is published from India.
18. On the contrary, respondents preferred Indian directories indicating Indian training institutions in WS, women's organizations and institutions for women in India as they find Indian information more relevant.
19. Biographical sources used are those of India, Asia and the Pacific. They use biographical sources to find out the contributions made and positions held of the biographee. Indian biographical sources, as mentioned by the respondents are found to be inadequate as they do not cover less prominent personalities, whereas, international biographical sources are found to be inadequate for not covering Indian personalities adequately.
20. Books/monographs are found to be used by majority of respondents as they are published commercially. As the book trade channels in India are well developed and the infrastructure for bibliographical control exists, information published in the form of books presents the least difficulty and are easily available.
21. It is interesting to note that Indian scholars also use not only Indian but International handbooks and resource guides published from other countries.
22. Association of Indian University (AIU) plays a vital role in disseminating information about Indian theses/dissertations submitted to universities of India.

AGENDA FOR THE FUTURE DIRECTION

1. In order to satisfy the information requirements of those working in the field of WS, there is an urgent need for a constant dialogue between the users and the information professionals. This can be done by conducting regular surveys at various levels so as to assess the information requirements of users.
2. Directories covering human resources and organizations at national/regional and local level should be developed with comprehensive coverage and good mechanism for their updation. Regional centers of WS situated in various parts of the country may take up this task of compiling directories.
3. There is no abstracting service on WS coming out from India so far. Though a few women's studies' centers have started indexing services e.g. CWDS, New Delhi; Jadavpur University, Kolkata and All India Association of Christian Higher Education, New Delhi but it is necessary to initiate such abstracting services covering Indian literature on women related issues.
4. There has been a remarkable increase during the last few decades in the number of institutional and individual efforts made in publishing bibliographies on Indian women but the number of such bibliographies is still limited. Moreover, there is no proper bibliographical control. They are in mimeo form or are usually available directly from the

institutions. It is therefore suggested that more systematic efforts should be made in this area and certain standards should be maintained.

5. There is an urgent need to develop comprehensive computerized bibliographic databases covering Indian women literature so as to facilitate easy updation and exchange. Moreover, this database should be made available to concerned institutions.
6. Not only new data bases should be created but also existing sources of information on WS should be analyzed, evaluated and assessed and should be updated keeping in mind researchers' requirements in the field of WS.
7. Due to tremendous increase in the cost of publications and growing demands of users, it has become impossible for a single library to meet the demands and there is a wide gap between their needs and resources. It is therefore, suggested that libraries having resources on WS must resort to more cooperative measures for sharing their resources. We must transform various loose and scattered library collections into an integrated structure with the help of technology available in the country, which will ensure greater accessibility to resources as well as maximum utilization of available funds.

FURTHER RESEARCH

1. It is suggested that systematic studies of the reading habits and use of literature by those working in the field of WS should be carried out in different geographical areas with different populations to get an overall and complete picture of their reading habits and information and literature use.
2. It is further suggested that separate studies using different variables may be carried out to determine the influence of each variable on the reading habits and use of literature in the field of WS.

Appendix – 1

LIST OF RESPONDED NGOs

1. Aastha Sansthan (Rajasthan)
2. All India Women's Conference, Lucknow (UP)
3. Centre for Communication Resource Development, Patna (Bihar)
4. DIOCESAN Social Work Centre, Lucknow (UP)
5. Energy Environment Technology International, Lucknow (UP)
6. Gandhian Institute of Studies, Varanasi (UP)
7. Giri Institute of Development Studies, Lucknow (UP)
8. Gobind Ballabh Pant University of Agriculture (Uttranchal)
9. ICCMRT
10. Institute of Social Studies Trust, New Delhi
11. Madhya Pradesh Institute of Social Science Research, Ujjain (MP)
12. Mahila Samakhya, Lucknow (UP)
13. National Council of Women in India, (UP)
14. NIPCCD, Reginal Centre, Lucknow (UP)
15. NIPCCD, New Delhi
16. Oxfam (India) Trust, Lucknow (UP)

17. Rajasthan Mahila Kalyan Mandal, Ajmer (Rajasthan)
18. Sahbhagi Shikshan Kendra, Lucknow (UP)
19. SSLNT Mahila Mahavidyalaya, Dhanbad (Bihar)
20. SURAKSHA, Lucknow (UP)
21. UNICEF, Lucknow (UP)
22. UNIFEM, New Delhi
23. UP Council for Child welfare, Lucknow (UP)
24. Uttar Pradesh Voluntary Action Network (UPVAN), Lucknow (UP)

Appendix – 2
LIBRARIES USEFUL IN THE FIELD OF WS IN ORDER OF PREFERENCE

1. National Library, Kolkata
2. Asiatic Library, Mumbai
3. SNDT Women's University Library, Mumbai
4. Center for Women's Development Studies, New Delhi
5. National Social Science Documentation Center, New Delhi
6. Institute of Social Studies Trust Library, New Delhi
7. Women's Library, Kolkata
8. Center for Rural Development Library, New Delhi
9. National Council for Educational Research and Training, New Delhi`
10. Indian Institute of Public Administration Library, New Delhi
11. Teen Murti Memorial Library, New Delhi
12. Jawaharlal Nehru University Library, New Delhi
13 Giri Institute of Development Studies, Lucknow

Appendix - 3
LIST OF FREQUENTLY USED GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS IN ORDER OF PREFERENCE

1. Policies, Programmes, Schemes, Legislation and Statistics on women. New Delhi. Documentation and Information Center, National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development, 1987
2. Committee on Status of women in India. Towards equality. Report of the Committee on Status of women in India. New Delhi. Ministry of Education and Social Welfare, Department of Welfare, 1975
3. Country Paper India: a Draft. Prepared for the 4th World Conference on women, Beijing, 1995. Government of India, Department of Women and Child Development
4. National Policy on Education, 1986. Chapter 12, Education for women's equality. New Delhi. Ministry of Human Resource Development, Department of Education 1986.
5. Working Group of Social Welfare. New Delhi. Ministry of Social Welfare. 1980
6. National Advisory Committee on study of educational backwardness of girls in selected states. New Delhi. National Council for Educational Research and Training. 1981.
7. National Perspective Plan for Women 1988-2000 A.D. Report of the Core Group set up by the Department of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Human and Resource Development, Govt. of India. New Delhi. 1988
8. National Plan of Action for the SAARC decade of the girl child. 1991-2000 AD. New Delhi. Govt. of India, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Department of Women and Child Development. 1992
9. Working Group set up by the Planning Commission on employment of women. New Delhi. Women's Welfare and Development Bureau, Department of Social Welfare. 1978.

10. Committee on Adult Education Programmes for women. Report. New Delhi. Ministry of Education and Social Welfare.

Appendix – 4

LIST OF FREQUENTLY USED PERIODICALS IN ORDER OF PREFERENCE

Sr. no.	Name of Periodicals	Rank
1.	Manushi, English, New Delhi	1
2.	Indian Journal of Gender Studies, English, New Delhi	2
3.	Women's Link, English, New Delhi	2
4.	RCWS Newsletter, English, Mumbai	3
5.	Bulletin of the CWDS, English, New Delhi	3
6.	Chetna News, English, Ahmedabad	4
7.	Mahila Samakhya Newsletter, English, Lucknow	5
8.	Women's Link Newsletter, English, New Delhi	5
9.	School of Women's Studies Newsletter, English, Kolkata	6
10.	Sahbhagi Ki Chitthi, Hindi, Lucknow	6
11.	Indian Association for WS Newsletter, English, New Delhi	6
12.	Asian Journal of Women's Studies, English, Seoul, Korea	6
13.	Sakhi Varta, Hindi, Lucknow	7
14.	Samajik, English, Pune	7
15.	Roshni, Hindi and English, New Delhi	7
16.	Women's Era, English, New Delhi	7
17.	National Advocacy Study Centre Bulletin, English	8
18.	Femina, English, Mumbai	8
19.	Society, English, Mumbai	8
20.	New Women, English	8
21.	Legal News and Views, English, New Delhi	8
22.	Nari Samvad, Hindi	8
23.	Indian Journal of Sociology, English	8
24.	Women's voice, English	8
25.	Social Scientists, English	8
26.	Kurushetra, English, New Delhi	8
27.	Saheli, Hindi,	8
28.	Journal of Gender Studies, English, New Delhi	8
29.	Frontline, English, Chennai	8
30.	Yojna, Hindi, English, New Delhi	8
31.	E P W (Economic and Political Weekly), English, Mumbai	8

Appendix - 5

LIST OF FREQUENTLY USED INDEXING / ABSTRACTING SOURCES AND SERVICES IN ORDER OF PREFERENCE

1. Guide to Women's Studies, 1986: an index to select international journal, SNDT Women's University, Mumbai, 1988
2. Women's Studies Index, 1986: a guide to Indian periodical literature, SNDT Women's University Library, 1987
3. Women's Studies: a current awareness bulletin, Jadavpur University Library, Kolkata
4. CWDS Library Documentation Bulletin, Center for Women's Development, New Delhi
5. Guide to Indian Periodical Literature, Indian Documentation Services, Gurgaon, 1964
6. Sociological Literature South Asia 1992 / edited by T K Oommen & P K Jaiswal, New Delhi: SLSA Publication, 1993
7. Critical Review of Researches in Women's Studies 1975-1988, SNDT Women's University, Mumbai, 1989
8. Review of Researches in Women's Studies, Faculty of Home Science, Department of Child Development, M S University of Baroda, Gujrat, 1987

Appendix - 6

LIST OF FREQUENTLY USED DICTIONARIES / THESAURI IN ORDER OF PREFERENCE

1. Harlow: Long man, 1989
2. Women's Thesaurus: an index of language used to describe and locate information by and about women / edited by Mary Ellen, New York: Harper & Row, 1987
3. Women World: A dictionary of world about women / by Jane Mills, Women in Development Thesaurus / edited by Zurniaty Nasrul... [et. al.] Djakarta: Indonesian Institute of Science Center for Scientific Documentation and Information, 1991
4. A Feminist Dictionary / edited by Cheris Kramarae and Paula Treichler, London: Pandora, 1985

Appendix – 7

LIST OF FREQUENTLY USED DIRECTORIES IN ORDER OF PREFERENCE

1. Women's Studies in Indian Universities, 1984-89: A directory of UGC supported centers / cells, Mumbai: SNDT Women's University, 1990
2. Directory of Women's Organizations, Mumbai, SNDT Women's University, 1990
3. Directory of Women's Studies in India, Delhi: Association of Indian University, 1991

4. Directory of Training Institutions dealing with Women's Training, New Delhi: National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development, 1990
5. Women's Studies In India: a directory of Research Institutions/ compiled by Gulnaz A Khan and edited by S V Ramani Rao, New Delhi: Ashish, 1993
6. Women's Studies in India: A directory/ compiled by Suchitra Anant, S V Ramani Rao and Shikha Goel, New Delhi: Institute of Social Studies Trust, 1986
7. List of Voluntary Organizations working for the development / welfare of women/ prepared by National Commission for Women, New Delhi
8. Directories of training Institutions dealing with women's training, New Delhi: Jawaharlal Nehru University, Adult Continuing Education and Extension Unit, 1990

Appendix – 8

LIST OF FREQUENTLY USED HANDBOOKS AND RESOURCE GUIDES IN ORDER OF PREFERENCE

1. Schemes for rural development scope for women: A handbook, New Delhi: UNICEF, 1982
2. Training schemes for women in the Government of India, New Delhi, National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development, Women's Development Division, 1989
3. Women's Studies In India: Information Sources, Services and programmes/ compiled by Anju Vyas and Sunita Singh, New Delhi: Sage, 1993
4. International Handbook of Women's Studies/ edited by Lou Lou Brown...[et.al.], New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1993
5. Women in Third World: A directory of resources/ compiled and edited by Thomas P. Fenton and Marry J. Herfronn, Mary knoll: Orbis, 1987
6. Women's Studies: A guide to information sources/ Sarch Carter and Maureen Ritchie, London: Manshell, 1990
7. Assistance for women's development from national agencies: development programme, 3 Vol., Mumbai: Popular, 1992

Appendix - 9

LIST OF FREQUENTLY USED BIOGRAPHICAL SOURCES IN ORDER OF PREFERENCE

1. Who's Who in Women's Studies in India, Mumbai: SNDT Women's University, 1984
2. Who's Who of Indian Women, Chennai: National Biographical Center, 1977
3. Women Social Scientists: Asia Pacific, Bangkok: UNESCO, 1987
4. Directory of Women Experts in Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok: United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, 1987
5. Directory of Indian women Today, New Delhi: India International, 1997

Appendix –10

LIST OF FREQUENTLY USED STATISTICAL RESOURCES IN ORDER OF PREFERENCE

1. Women in India: A statistical panorama, Prabash P Singh, New Delhi: Inter India, 1990
2. Women in India: A statistical profile, New Delhi: Ministry of Human resource Development, Department of Women and Child Development, 1988
3. Women and Development/ Sheel C Nuna, New Delhi: National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration, 1990
4. The World's Women 1970-1990: Trends and Statistics, New York: United Nations Publications, 1991
5. Handbook of International Data on Women/ Elise Boulding…[et.al.], New York: Wiley, 1976
6. Women in the World: An International Atlas/ Jani Seager and Ann Olson, London: Pluto, 1986
7. Statistics relating to employment and unemployment of women, New Delhi: Planning Commission, 1985
8. The Status of Women: Literacy and Employment/ Ashok Mitra, Mumbai: Allied, 1979

Appendix - 11

LIST OF FREQUENTLY USED DISSERTATION SOURCES IN ORDER OF PREFERENCE

1. Bibliography of Doctoral Dissertations, New Delhi: Association of Indian Universities (AIU)
2. University News, a weekly journal, New Delhi: Association of Indian Universities (AIU)
3. Women's Studies: A bibliography of dissertations 1870-1982, New York: B Blackwell, 1985
4. Indian Dissertation Abstracts, New Delhi: Indian Council of Social Science Research, Quarterly

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